



Tony Cárdenas
Congress of the United States
29th District, California

May 6, 2022

The Honorable Billy Nolen
Acting Administrator
Federal Aviation Administration
800 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20591

The Honorable John R. Dermody
Director
Federal Aviation Administration
Office of Airport Safety and Standards
800 Independence Avenue SW
Washington, DC 20591

Dear Acting Administrator Dickson and Director Dermody:

I write to express my profound concern and frustration with the numerous plane crashes that have involved planes taking off or landing at Whiteman Airport located in Pacoima, California, including the most recent incident on April 20, 2022. This most recent plane crash involved a small engine plane from Whiteman Airport, which crashed into the embankment of the Westbound Interstate 210 Freeway in Sylmar, California. The crash was within feet of a high-volume freeway, high-capacity power lines, commercial center and residential homes. Unfortunately, it led to the pilot's death, a fuel spill and the shutdown of Interstate 210.

As you are aware, incidents at this airport have become a regularity. This most recent plane crash from Whiteman Airport – in addition to the previous crashes in January 2022, November 2020 and September 2018 – have raised serious concerns for the safety of the communities and families surrounding Whiteman Airport as well as the pilots, personnel and staff that have access to or are located at the airport. Los Angeles County, the owner and operator of Whiteman Airport, has a responsibility to ensure that the airport meets the necessary airport safety and standards and that all safety practices are followed as required by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). These incidents have demonstrated that Los Angeles County is failing to achieve the required safety standards and, as a result, trust with the community has been broken.

The lack of urgency and attention to ensuring that this airport is running safely is unacceptable. I am requesting that a 30-day moratorium on all flights originating from Whiteman Airport, except public safety or medical emergency flights. During the flight moratorium, a full investigation and audit of Los Angeles County's safety operations at Whiteman Airport needs to be conducted. This investigation should include:

- 1) All aircraft incidents or citations levied by the FAA or any other agency.
- 2) All documentation related to maintenance of the planes.
- 3) All documentation related to safety training of all pilots at Whiteman Airport.

Finally, I expect your office to share your findings expeditiously and with full transparency. It is paramount that the FAA and Los Angeles County ensure the safety of all parties and steps must be taken immediately at Whiteman Airport to ensure our families and community are safe.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter. I respectfully request a prompt response to the above concerns and the request for a full investigation and audit of LA County safety operations of Whiteman Airport by June 3, 2022. If you have any questions or wish to discuss this letter further, please call my office at (202) 225-6131.

Sincerely,



TONY CARDENAS
Member of Congress